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Boston, Aug. 18, 1875.

Dr. A. M. Ross:

Dear Sir—Accept my thanks for your volume, entitled "Recollections and Experiences of an Abolitionist." You will hardly need to be assured that I have read it with great interest and satisfaction. I hope you will send a copy to the Librarian of Cornell University, at Ithaca, N.Y., to be preserved with the large collection of anti-slavery books, pamphlets, tracts, journals, &c., which is constantly augmenting, and to which future historians of the great struggle will turn as furnishing the most extensive materials for their research.

The remembrance of the zealous, active and hazardous part which you took in that struggle, —

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particularly with reference to enabling slaves to escape from the Southern house of bondage, and procuring for them aid and succor on their way to Canada, and after their arrival on that side of the line, - must always be a source of unalloyed pleasure to you. That you did not fall a victim to your humanity, in view of the perils which everywhere at the South beset your pathway, but were permitted to see the entire four millions of slaves set free from their bonds, and raised from chattelhood to the rights of American citizenship, is indeed cause for equal wonder and congratulations. Neither you, nor I, nor any other Abolitionist expected to live to see this unparalleled transformation.

"Loud and long  
Lift the old exulting song;  
Sing with Miriam by the sea,  
"He has cast the mighty down;  
Horse and rider sink and drown;  
He hath triumphed gloriously!"

At times, however, it seems  
almost like a dream, rather than a  
bright reality.

On pages 22 and 23 of your  
volume there are some sentiments attribu-  
ted to John Brown which I regretted to  
see, which are not creditable to his  
moral discernment, and which it is  
a pity you did not omit, even if it  
is true that he gave utterance to them;  
namely,

"Capt. Brown had little respect  
for that class of Abolitionists who,  
from their abodes of safety in the North,  
spoke so bravely in behalf of the oppressed

colored people of the Slave States,  
but who took good care to keep their  
precious bodies north of the Potomac."

Now, this was an absurd  
and cruel taunt, a most inexcusable  
and slanderous charge of cowardice  
and hollow-heartedness, made against  
the entire body of Northern Abolitionists  
because the weapons of their warfare  
were not swords and muskets, but those  
of "Truth and Love,"

Made mighty through the living God.  
The world has never seen braver  
spirits than they - the oppressed have  
never had more faithful and self-  
sacrificing advocates; and to repre-  
sent them as intent on keeping "their  
precious bodies" from harm, while  
professing to remember those in bonds  
as bound with them! - and this, too,  
from John Brown! Against

He stoutly maintained that the only way to abolish slavery was conveying to the slaves such information as would aid them in making their escape to Canada, and by encouraging insurrection among the slaves, &c.

This indicates total disbelief in the efficacy of spiritual weapons against the strongholds of Satan. Why, it was solely by the use of such weapons that the slave system was shaken to its foundation, the whole country convulsed as by an all-pervading earthquake, the traffickers in human flesh driven to madness, Church & State vanquished in the field of conflict, a mighty and irresistible change wrought in public sentiment, the underground railroad established, the rebellion of the South an inevitable consequence, and the final abolition of slavery the glorious result.

A song of praise to Him who filled  
The harvest sown in tears,  
And gave each field a double yield  
To feed our battle-years!

A song of faith that trusts the end  
To match the good begun,  
Nor doubt the power of love to blend  
The hearts of men as one!"

Take away the moral agitation for the immediate and unconditional emancipation of the enslaved, and they would still be clanking their chains in hopeless servitude

Once more! -

"John Brown said he had found, by experience, that those Abolitionists who made the most noise (!) from the pulpit and lecture-rooms, were the last to offer a dollar to-ward any practical means for the liberation of the slaves...

Those who had the means to help him make war upon the oppressor were lukewarm, or declined to aid him in his warfare!"

This evinces a diseased and querulous state of mind, and an inability to comprehend the real strength and grandeur of the Anti-Slavery movement. Moreover, it was an unjust sling at the parties referred to, as though the reasons for their declining to aid in an attempt to excite servile insurrection were lukewarmness to the condition of the oppressed on the one hand, and parsimony on the other! Would John Brown have had the Abolitionists play the hypocrite to support his wild undertaking? In their Declaration of Sentiments, at the outset, they declared to the country and the world—"Our measures shall be such only as the opposition of moral purity to moral corruption, the destruction of error by

the potency of truth, the overthrow of  
prejudice by the power of love, and  
the abolition of slavery by the spirit of  
repentance." Besides, if they had not  
thus committed themselves to peaceful  
instrumentalities, it was not for John  
Brown to insist on their giving him pecu-  
liar and other assistance to carry out  
his scheme, on pain of being proclaimed  
mere pretenders; but it was for them to  
decide, animated by as earnest a desire  
to see every bondman set free as ever he  
evinced, whether they believed his scheme  
to be wise or practicable. And a scheme  
of invasion more wild was never under-  
taken in a sane state of mind, though  
happily overruled for good. It is not  
John Brown with his musket, but  
deprived of his weapon, wounded almost  
unto death, incarcerated in prison under  
sentence of death, giving utterance through  
his letters to the noblest sentiments, and

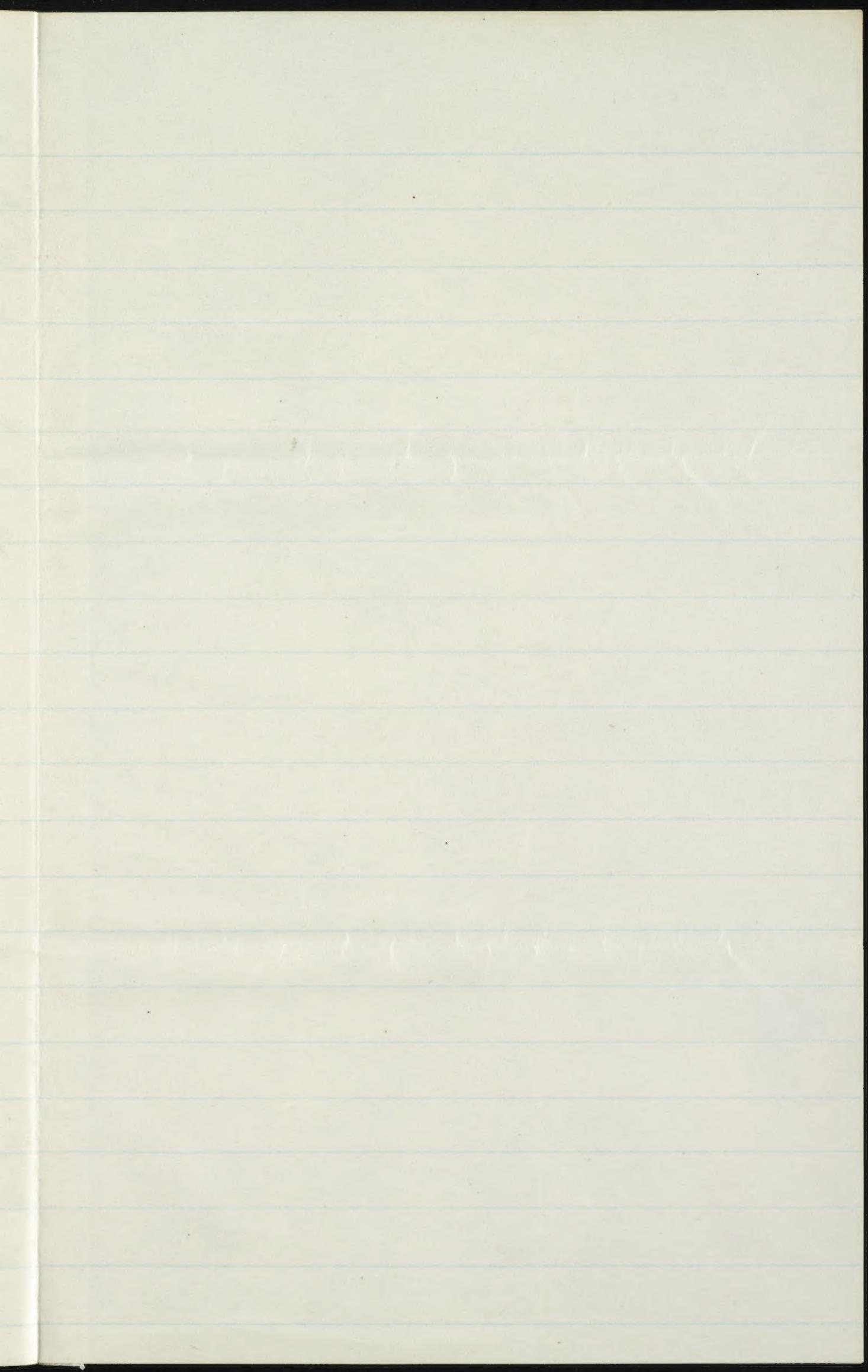
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on the scaffold meeting his fate in the spirit of the early martyrs, that excites the sympathy and admiration of the world.

But I did not think of extending criticism to this length, and must conclude by thanking you again for your volume.

Very cordially yours,  
(Signed) Wm. Lloyd Garrison.





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